

A Misunderstanding is Where We Start by thegirlcourageous

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Genre: Alternate Universe - No Pennywise (IT), Bev and Ben are married, In my mind they're all in their 30s, Love Confessions, M/M, Misunderstandings, Not Actually Unrequited Love, Richie Tozier is a Mess, and have a kid, and is like super excited, but she's also wrong, did i tag too much?, eddie is confused, or like Bev misunderstands, perhaps, poor richie

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Summary:

Misunderstandings don't have to be bad. Sometimes, they can lead to something really, really good.

A Misunderstanding is Where We Start

It was the buzzing that woke him. This incessant buzzing that wouldn't stop however much he tried to ignore it. Without opening his eyes, he fumbled around for his phone on the nightstand, almost knocking it down on the floor before he finally enclosed his fingers around it.

He rubbed at his eyes, squinting at the painfully bright screen. It said Bev. He was pretty sure it said Bev. With a sigh, he accepted the call with a groggy sounding, "what."

"Morning!"

Richie simply groaned in reply. Bev had this annoying habit of being particularly chirpy in the morning, and it went against everything that Richie believed in. His very soul shuddered at the very thought of trying to get up before 10 am on any given day. And he was fairly certain Bev knew exactly how he felt and called on purpose, just to wind him up. It was the only reason. He was sure of it.

"It would be better if you didn't call me at the asscrack of dawn." He yawned audibly, but instead of getting any of sympathy, Bev just laughed at him.

"It's 9.30. You get no pity from me. I've been up since 4 am."

"That's your own fault. You and Ben wanted to have a baby, remember? No one actually forced either of you to make that

decision.”

“Valid argument, Tozier, however, I’ve been trying to soothe a tiny teething little human screaming on and off for hours. Logic isn’t going to work with me right now. I’m past logic. So past it, it looks like a little line in the distance.”

Richie huffed a laugh into the phone, “Well, when you put it like *that...*”

"Yup!"

"So, how's Ben this fine morning? A ridiculous zombie shell of the man we all know and love?"

“Oh," Bev laughed quietly, "he’s passed out right next to me. Actually, they both are.” Richie could almost see the no doubt adoring look she was giving Ben and Vivienne, their 7-month-old daughter. Had seen it enough times since they’d brought little Vivi home to know exactly how it looked. It was sweet, really.

"So, you're bothering me because everyone on your end is asleep? Gotcha."

"Rude! That's not—"

But before she could finished her sentence, it was cut off by a gruff,

“Can you tell Bev to shut the fuck up? I’m trying to sleep.”

Richie froze. He’d almost forgotten that Eddie was even there.

For a couple of seconds, the line was blissfully silent. And then Bev practically exploded, “Is that Eddie?!”

Richie held the phone away from his face. Oh, god. He had a bad feeling about this.

“Holy shit, Richie!” Her voice was excited, and Richie now had a really bad feeling about where this was going, “You finally confessed?”

And there it was.

She didn’t wait for his answer, not that Richie thought he was able to produce anything in the way of speech at the moment. He was too busy internally combusting to remember such trivial things as words and sentence structure.

In the background, he could make out how she was shaking Ben awake, going, “Babe. Babe! Wake up! Richie finally confessed to Eddie!” He heard how Ben grumbled something in reply, and Bev went, “Yes! He’s sleeping in his bed!” There was some more mumbling from Ben, and then Bev again, “Exactly! Just like he said. This is so exciting! I can’t breathe.” Then, Ben’s voice came through the line properly, sounding way past tired, to say, “Really happy for

you, Rich. But I'm going to have to remind my wife that if she wakes up the baby because of the loud volume of her voice, she can deal with the consequences by herself. I really don't want to spend another 3 hours trying to get her to fall back asleep."

He obviously handed the phone back to Bev after that, as Bev continued, but now at a lower volume, "Tell me everything." Her voice, however, had lost none of its delight.

Richie didn't know what to say though. His mind was a blank space. She sounded like this development was such good news, like she was so pleased for them, for him. Oh, if only it were good news.

"Did she just—" Eddie started, but Bev's voice over the phone cut him off with a well timed, "Richie, hello?". First of all, if something had actually happened, did Bev honestly think he'd be wasting time right now talking to her? No, he really wouldn't have. Secondly, what the hell type of sorcery was this? How did she make her voice carry like that? Even when he'd frantically turned the volume down the moment that she'd started squealing all over the place, Eddie had apparently still heard her, clear as fucking day. For a moment, Richie had hoped desperately that Eddie hadn't heard anything. But it would seem that luck was not on his side.

Richie didn't even dare look in Eddie's direction. Fucking Bev spilling his secrets all over the place. And so early in the morning. He'd known that drunkenly spilling his guts to her last year, and, on account of the two of them living together, also Ben, would inevitably come back and bite him in the ass at some point. The memories were resurfacing, coming back with a vengeance at potentially the most inopportune moment.

He cringed at how he'd shown up to their place, messy and soaked to the bone, because, as fortune would have it, he'd gotten caught in an unexpected downpour on the way there. At the time, he'd thought that the rain had been an especially cruel addition to an already exceedingly shitty day. He'd been upset because Eddie had gone on a date. And he remembered thinking that this was the moment that he lost Eddie forever, lost his chance because he was too chickenshit to ever actually say anything. He'd been so sure that Eddie was going to fall madly in love with this unknown person, and go off and get married and have babies and travel the world with them, that they would be allowed to do all the things with Eddie that Richie wanted to do. So, he'd completely broken down on their couch, told them both that he was in love with Eddie. Had even cried at some point, if he remembered correctly. Bev, who had been very pregnant at the time, had cried with him, hopped up on hormones as she'd been, while Ben, poor sweet Ben, had made them tea, and then spent the rest of the night providing emotional comfort as well as a shoulder to cry on. Well, two shoulders to cry on, because in the end, both Bev and Richie had ended up been leaning on him, crying into the fabric of his shirt. There had been two sizable wet spots on both of his shoulders when they'd finally calmed down. And Ben, being as kind as he normally was, hadn't even mentioned it.

So, he couldn't even be angry. They'd really been there for him when he'd needed them. And Bev didn't know what she'd done, couldn't have known. But have some tact sometimes, woman. Was that too much to ask?

He took a steadying breath that did little to nothing to calm his racing heart, and then steeled himself. It was time for damage control.

"Ok, well, Bevvie, it's been real nice talking to you this fineee morning but, oh, would you look at the time? Gotta run! Kiss Vivi for me! Actually, kiss Ben for me as well! Tata!" Richie said, voice laced

with what sounded a lot like forced enthusiasm on his part, but it was all he had, so he was rolling with it. Quickly, and with fumbling hands, he exited the call, and in his haste, somehow managed to throw his phone across the room.

Which. Smooth. Nothing weird going on here at all. Great start.

The bedroom was silent for an unnervingly long time. Richie could hear the thunderous pounding of his heart, and he was sure Eddie could too. Traitorous heart giving him away.

“Richie?” His voice sounded so uncertain. Richie really hated that. That wasn’t what Eddie was supposed to sound like, “What did she mean?”

And yeah. Nope. Richie wasn’t ready for this shit. *Shit*. He tried to come up with anything to say, well, anything but the truth. The truth was difficult and scary. The truth was big and all encompassing, it was baring the love that he’d nurtured for so many years. He didn’t know how to just open the doors on something like that, how to let the person it was all for in, really let him *see* how strongly Richie felt. The depth of his devotion surprised even Richie sometimes, he was sure he’d give Eddie a panic attack or something.

Which, frankly, would suck.

“Richie, c’mon. Look at me.”

He turned his face in Eddie's direction, but couldn't bring himself to meet the other's eyes. Instead, his eyes focused on a spot on the wall just behind Eddie's left ear.

Eddie made a noise that Richie couldn't quite place. It sounded like something between a scoff and a huffed out laugh.

But still, Richie, he just couldn't. This was too much, too soon. There was no guarantee that this conversation wouldn't end in heartbreak for him. Actually, he was pretty sure the only way this could possibly end was in heartbreak. So, he continued to stare at his spot. It was a good spot. He just might spend the rest of his life staring at this spot.

"Please." Eddie said, the frustration at Richie's refusal evident in his voice. Dammit. Richie was just going to have to face this situation head on. In the long run, it would probably be the best choice. Reluctantly, Richie allowed his eyes to meet Eddie's. And really, it wasn't as scary as he'd initially assumed. But it did allow him to see something. Something he thought he'd never be able to see.

A rumpled Eddie sitting in his bed, with lines on his face from the pillow he'd been sleeping on, just looking at him.

If he hadn't been so frightened, maybe he'd have been more flustered at this unedited version of Eddie that he was now finally allowing himself to see in real life. And right as it was about to all fall apart... He really had the worst luck.

Eddie was shifting closer on the bed, moving in that slowly way people usually do when trying to not scare a frightened animal. In a

sudden moment of clarity, Richie realized suddenly that he must be the animal in this equation. Real attractive, he was sure.

“Don’t freak out. I’m just going to hold your hand.” Eddie was trying to sound reassuring, and Richie appreciated it immensely, but he couldn’t hold hands with Eddie. Not now.

So, instead of moving his hand out of reach, or pausing to reflect on the right words to say, he blurted out, “I’ve been in— No, that’s not right. I— *Fuck!* Love. You. I do, that is. Shit.” Richie hid behind his hands. That was the actual worst confession. Ever.

Eddie didn’t say anything, just looked at him. Richie could feel the weight of the stare, even though his eyes remained stubbornly closed.

After several long silent minutes, Richie braved peeking through his fingers. And what a sight he was met with. Eddie was gaping at him, and his whole face was crimson.

Richie let his hands fall down to his side.

“Um—” Eddie began, but he cut himself off, and he looked down, seeming to focus all his attention on his fingers that were holding on to the duvet with what looked like a death grip. He raised his eyes again. Opened his mouth, and choked out a strangled, “Me. Too.” His face somehow growing redder by the second.

Richie regarded him, something dangerously like hope blossoming in

his chest.

“Wait...really?” He forced himself not to sound too emotional. Like his very happiness wasn't riding on Eddie's answer.

Eddie nodded, not breaking eye contact.

A grin overtook Richie's face, and Eddie smiled back at him.

“How long?” Richie had to know.

“Oh...” Eddie seemed hesitant to reply, but before Richie could take back his question, Eddie mumbled, nodding emphatically as if to confirm his own words, “Years.”

“Years...” Richie breathed out, before quickly adding, “Yeah, years for me too. It's been you for such a long time.” He laughed at himself, before softly saying, “I can't believe this is happening.”

“That makes two of us.” Eddie replied, reaching out for Richie's hand once more. This time Richie met him halfway.

“This sure wasn't what I imagined happening last night, you know.” Richie tried to joke, but missing by miles. Ah, the good old joking default was kicking in. Splendid.

Eddie squeezed his hand tight as if to tell him that it was alright. To take his time. That they didn't have to figure everything out right this moment. That this was just the beginning. That they had time. Richie couldn't help but be grateful that Eddie knew him well enough to figure him out based off of one bad joke.

Suddenly exhausted, Richie flopped backwards, laying down on the mattress. Eddie joined him a second later, hesitantly putting his head on Richie's shoulder. Immediately, Richie lifted his arm to allow Eddie to move closer.

For the first time in a long time, Richie felt at peace.

"Just one question. Well, for now anyway." Eddie said, breaking the silence, "Why was Bev so sure you'd confessed to me when you were on the phone?"

For the first time that morning, it was Richie's turn to blush. He knew why Bev had been so sure. He knew because that night where he'd confessed his feelings for Eddie to her, well, he'd told her a lot of things. One such thing being that he couldn't bear the thought of Eddie being anywhere near his bed if they weren't actually together, couldn't bear it if he didn't know that Eddie had feelings for him as well. Even the thought of it was too painful to even consider it. So, he'd set some ground rules for himself, the main one being that Eddie wasn't allowed anywhere near his bed.

Yet, he'd let Eddie sleep in his bed last night, and they hadn't even been drunk. But Eddie had been sad and anxious for days and had hardly slept all of last week. It had been a no brainer to try and help him in whatever way he could, even if all he could give was a reassuring presence in the darkness. However stupid it had been,

Richie knew that he couldn't regret it. He had never regretted helping Eddie with anything.

He swallowed, and looked down at Eddie, meeting his questioning brown eyes. Richie sighed, a silly little grin on his lips. Relationships were all about honesty and communication, or so he'd heard. And he wasn't about to drive Eddie away by getting this wrong. He wasn't going to start this new, unnamed thing between them with a lie. Even if telling the whole thing was a little embarrassing.

"So, you see..." Richie said, preparing to tell the story, "It all happened on a rainy night last year."

Author's Note:

This is Day 6. On December 8th. LE SIGH. Things are really not going my way haha